

DECLASSIFIED

PLEASE CREDIT ANY QUOTES OR EXCERPTS FROM THIS ABC RADIO AND
TELEVISION PROGRAM TO "ABC'S ISSUES AND ANSWERS."

65D438

I S S U E S A N D A N S W E R S

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

INTERVIEWED BY J. L. SMITH DATE APR 18 1984

CLASSIFIED ☐ EXT. DATE _____
AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☒
RELEASE DENIED ☐
FOI or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

HOLD FOR RELEASE
: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11,
: 1962, 3:00 P.M.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1962

GUEST: The Honorable Roswell L. Gilpatric
Deputy Secretary of Defense

INTERVIEWED BY: Bob Clark, ABC Correspondent
and
John Scali, ABC Correspondent

THE ANNOUNCER: Deputy Secretary of Defense, Roswell
L. Gilpatric, here are the issues: How can we be sure all the
Soviet missiles are out of Cuba?

Have we guaranteed the Communists an invasion-free
sanctuary in the Caribbean?

What does the Cuban crisis reveal about Russia's
military might?

You have heard the issues. Now for the answers from
the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Roswell L. Gilpatric who

DECLASSIFIED

2

is a member of the President's three-man committee currently negotiating the conclusion of the Cuban crisis. To interview Secretary Gilpatric, here are ABC Correspondent Bob Clark and with the first question, ABC Correspondent John Scali.

MR. SCALI: Mr. Secretary, welcome to ISSUES AND ANSWERS.

It seems to me that our inspection of the Soviet missiles at sea, as the missiles leave Cuba, really constitutes no more than a peek. How can we be sure that the Soviets haven't left any missiles behind?

MR. GILPATRIC: Mr. Scali, we never knew how many missiles were brought into Cuba. The Soviets said there were 42. We have counted 42 going out. We saw fewer than 42. Until we have so-called on-site inspection of the island of Cuba we could never be sure that 42 was the maximum number that the Soviets brought into Cuba.

MR. SCALI: Well, Mr. Secretary, were all these missiles medium-range and intermediate-range or just one kind?

MR. GILPATRIC: The missiles that we saw and the missiles which have been removed are the medium-range. That is about 1,020 miles range. We never saw any IRBM's for which sites were being prepared, but for which no missiles apparently were put into place.

MR. CLARK: How about the Soviet jet bombers in Cuba, are we going to insist that they go too?

MR. GILPATRIC: I'd regard them as offensive weapons.

~~DECLASSIFIED~~

They have ~~strategic capabilities similar~~ to our own B-47's. They are no older. They can carry six or seven thousand pounds of high explosives a range of 700 or 800 miles which would reach portions of the United States and other Latin American countries, and we think they clearly fall within the weapons we regard as offensive which was what we aim to remove from Cuba.

MR. CLARK: How serious are we about their removal at this stage? Would we really fire up the Cuban crisis again to be sure that these bombers are taken out of Cuba?

MR. GILPATRICK: Our objective remains to remove that kind of a threat from Cuba.

MR. SCALI: Well, Mr. Secretary, if there is no on-site inspection, plus a look for example into caves to see whether there are any hidden offensive weapons, will we stand by our pledge not to invade Cuba?

MR. GILPATRICK: Our pledge in the President's statement to Premier Khrushchev is twofold. It is that once the Soviet commitments have been fulfilled or arrangements satisfactory to that end have been made, we will lift the blockade and we will offer assurances against the invasion of Cuba.

Our obligations do not come into play, however, until the Soviets have fully carried out their commitments and as of the present time there has only been a partial fulfillment.

~~DECLASSIFIED~~

DECLASSIFIED

They have simply removed what they say were the missiles that were brought in. Beyond that their performance has not yet gone.

MR. SCALI: Well, what can we say to them when the Soviet come back to us and say "Well, we have tried to talk Castro into giving up these bombers and he won't"?

MR. GILPATRIC: We hold the Soviets responsible for the types of military equipment which it has furnished to Castro and as of the present time we regard the removal of those bombers as within the capacity of the Soviets to bring about. What future developments may tell, I am not in a position to judge.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Secretary, aerial reconnaissance has been our most valuable way, first of detecting the presence of the Soviet missile bases and then of assuring that the bases had been dismantled and that the missiles were being moved out. How long do we plan to keep up this aerial survey?

MR. GILPATRIC: We regard aerial surveillance as a part of our inherent self-defense, a means of protecting our country as we would through any form of intelligence collection. The extent to which we will need to rely on continued air surveillance over Cuba will depend again on what the nature of the threat is that remains in Cuba after the Soviets have completed, if they do complete, the undertakings made by Premier Khrushchev to President Kennedy.

DECLASSIFIED

MR. GLASS: Do you mean we might continue aerial inspection even though we were totally assured that the missiles will be removed?

MR. GILPATRICK: As I say, the conduct of aerial surveillance is part of our overall intelligence collection system and we never are going to bargain away any part of our right of self-defense, which includes the conduct of aerial surveillance. I do not know as of today what the need would be in the future for a particular type or a particular frequency of aerial surveillance over Cuba or any other foreign country.

MR. SCALI: Mr. Secretary, nothing much has been said lately about those 5,000 or so Soviet military technicians that went to Cuba with many of these weapons. If I recall the Pentagon did say that it saw several hundred young Soviets aboard one of the freighters leaving Cuba. What has happened to them? Are they leaving? Have they left?

MR. GILPATRICK: We have seen a number -- several boarding ships, or hundred in fact, Mr. Scali, on board ships and we believe that the technicians who are associated with the weapons that are being removed, the MRBM's are probably en route back to Russia along with those weapons. Now how many "technicians" remain in Cuba in connection with the IL-28 bombers or with the surface-to-air missiles or with the other equipment

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

6

which has been furnished for the military in Cuba by the Soviets, it is impossible for us to tell as of now.

MR. CLARK: How about those 70 Soviet MIG fighters that are still in Cuba, are we worried about those?

MR. GILPATRICK: The MIG fighters are primarily interceptors. That is they are used in a defensive role. They have a range, of course, that could carry them across the Florida straits and over the mainland of the United States. Indeed they could reach other parts of the Caribbean area, but they are designed primarily as our fighters are of similar nature, as air defense fighters so we have not classified them as weapons which we regard as offensive.

MR. SCALI: They could be used, couldn't they, though, to deliver nuclear bombs if they were converted to longer-range, fuel tanks and so on?

MR. GILPATRICK: I haven't examined the characteristics of the MIG's. Only a few of them, only a portion of the total number of MIG's are the high-performance. There are MIG-17's and 19's as well as MIG-21's. It might be that these MIG's could be used for nuclear weapons delivery although that has not happened before to my knowledge.

MR. SCALI: Well, Mr. Secretary, how about the anti-aircraft missiles and the missile sites, do we continue to classify them as defensive weapons and thereby conclude that the Soviets don't have to remove those at the

present time?

MR. GILPATRICK: The characteristics of the surface-to-air missiles which have been installed in Cuba by the Soviets is such that their cone of fire, their range, their general utilization is such that we don't consider them a threat to the United States or to other Latin American countries. Obviously they facilitate the use of offensive weapons, so it would depend on what weapons Cuba was left with to know how valuable those surface-to-air missiles are to the Cubans or how much danger they pose for us.

MR. SCALI: Some Republican critics claim that the President's agreement with Mr. Khrushchev guarantees a sanctuary for communism in the Western Hemisphere which will not be invaded. What do you say to criticism of that kind?

MR. GILPATRICK: Well, as I said earlier, our covenants, the United States government's pledges regarding invasion of Cuba do not come into play until the commitments on the Soviet's part have been fulfilled so as of now we don't have any obligation that is extant because the Soviet performance has only been partial.

Assuming for the moment that the Soviet performance is complete, which may be a very large assumption and therefore that our pledge about invasion does come into play, it may not fundamentally change the status quo

RECORDED

DECLASSIFIED

ante because under the Rio Pact and under our own national policy we have never had an objective of invading Cuba. We have an objective of maintaining peace in the Caribbean, of protecting the United States and honoring our treaty obligations under both the UN Charter and the Rio Pact.

MR. CLARK: I think you would agree, though, that we were pretty close to a decision on possible invasion of Cuba at one point, weren't we?

MR. GILPATRICK: It was one of the courses of action that obviously came up for consideration if the Soviets had not backed down and removed at least the most threatening of the offensive weapons that we found there had been introduced surreptitiously and by deceitful means prior to the 14th of October.

MR. CLARK: And it is a course of action which will now be closed to us if the Soviets do carry out their pledge to remove all offensive weapons?

MR. GILPATRICK: The Castro problem we had before the Soviets decided to establish a major military base in Cuba and we will have the problem after the Soviets' base is removed.

MR. SCALI: Mr. Secretary, some persons have said that the Administration was just late in waking up to the fact that these missiles were there, that actually they were there far longer than our intelligence had reason to believe.

DECLASSIFIED

Do you accept this?

5

MR. GILPATRICK: No, because I feel we have had access to the most effective intelligence means that have yet been developed, to my knowledge at least. We acted immediately upon the receipt of intelligence that the missile bases were installed. There was a great deal of concealment, a great deal of secrecy about the introduction of those weapons. The actual preparing of the sites and the placement on them of these weapons took place very quickly and I believe that we acted as quickly as we could.

Now as bearing on that it is most important to remember that for our allies to stand with us as they did so effectively in the OAS, as well as the support which we have since received from our other allies in NATO and elsewhere throughout the world, we had to have a hard case. We had to have good evidence of this threat and without the kind of photography which our surveillance planes came through with, beginning with the 14th of October, I doubt that we would have had this support and that we could have been as effective in our policies.

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

MR. SCALI: How long do you think Mr. Secretary those medium-range missiles were in Cuba before we spotted them?

MR. GILPATRIC: Well all I know is our photography at the end of August, as the President has pointed out, did not disclose any of these missiles and therefore our assumption is that some time between the end of August and the 14th of October they were brought in or at least they were brought out into the open in the erection process and the placement of the missiles on the sites where we first observed them.

MR. CLARK: Of course those first pictures which were made public by the Pentagon which were taken, I believe, on October 14 showed that these bases were almost completed. Now doesn't this indicate there was a lag in our aerial survey, that there was a period of perhaps a couple of weeks where our aerial inspection was inadequate?

MR. GILPATRIC: The first pictures, as I recall, at San-Cristobal were of only one or two sites, one of which was only partly completed, and only had part of the equipment on it.

Now we subsequently through the extension of our surveillance during the week after the 14th did pick up additional sites. How fast those were brought in, how much before construction was under way and during a period I might say when our surveillance was hampered by bad weather, I don't think we will ever know exactly the exact sequence of events during those six weeks from the end of August until the middle of October.

MR. SCALF: Mr. Secretary, is it possible that the rapidity with which we did spot these medium range missiles stopped the Soviets in mid-sea from bringing their longer range missiles into Cuba?

MR. GILPATRIC: That is another enigma we may never have the answer to. We do know that after our limited quarantine was imposed beginning following the President's statement on the 22nd of October, a number of Russian ships turned back, including at least two ships that had large hatches and holds sufficient to accommodate missiles, so we assume -- in fact I believe there were further missiles on their way over when we announced our decision to apply the quarantine measure.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Secretary, much has been said about the threat of nuclear war that hung over the world during this period. Do you think we were ever at the brink of war with the Soviets?

MR. GILPATRIC: Here was a situation where the two great thermonuclear powers of the world were in direct confrontation over a major issue, something that, as the President pointed out in his statement of October 22, was a new departure from any move the Soviets had made before. They had never attempted to bring as close to the shores of the United States the existence of their strategic weapons. Obviously under those circumstances, very grave consequences could have ensued had not the Soviets backed down.

RECORDED

DECLASSIFIED

MR. CLARK: What do you think Khrushchev's real motive was in trying to establish these missile bases in Cuba?

MR. GILPATRICK: I can't read his mind and I have never heard any single explanation which would answer all the questions that might occur to any of us in analyzing his motives. Obviously he was, I think, trying to present us with a heightened threat for some purpose, whether to enhance his bargaining position over Berlin or in some other of the numerous confrontations we have with the Sino-Soviet bloc throughout the world. We have to view the threat of communism in its totality. We have to regard it as an indivisible affair. We have to make all our policy decisions in the light of reactions and counter-reactions and how the Soviet moves in this particular instance related to other plans they had I couldn't say and may never know.

MR. SCALI: Do you think that perhaps Mr. Khrushchev might have decided on this very chancey maneuver because he realized that compared to the United States the Soviet Union is weak in its ability to deliver nuclear warheads, on target?

MR. GILPATRICK: I do not regard the Soviets as considering themselves weak. We do feel we have, as we have stated several times during the past twelve to eighteen months, a measurable margin of superiority in strategic weapons. Khrushchev, we think, knows that and while our intelligence is not precise enough to put a pair of calipers on the margin of the superiority we enjoy, it may be possible to read him to think that he had to

DECLASSIFIED

improve his strategic posture but in my own mind the military equation was not altered, the military equation between the Soviets and the United States, by the bringing closer to our shores of these missiles that previously had been ranged against us, or longer range missiles of the same weapon-carrying capacity at longer range. After all, the Soviets have missile-bearing submarines. Those submarines can reach our shores and warheads comparable to those that would have been borne by these missiles could be struck from submarines off our shore. So that I don't believe there was any major change in the over-all military equation as a result of this particular deployment.

MR. CLARK: Do you think then that we have over emphasized the danger of these medium range missile bases in Cuba?

MR. GILPATRICK: Not at all. I think the presence of the missiles there, in this context of this being the first time the Soviets had ever put any such weapons outside their own immediate territory and in a situation where they might not always be able to control them, where you had a much shorter warning period and where the effect on the Latin American countries as well as on ourselves in the Western Hemisphere was very destabilizing -- it changed the juxtaposition of these arrays of power, so I think it was of major importance, of great danger to us but I don't believe that we were under any greater threat from the Soviet Union's power taken in its totality after

DECLASSIFIED

this than we were before. It was simply an element of flexibility introduced into the power equation that the Soviets had not heretofore possessed.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Secretary, a private British study this week estimated that the United States has six times as many intercontinental missiles as the Soviet has. Does that sound about right to you?

MR. GILPATRIC: I couldn't comment on the arithmetic. As I said before, we have a margin of superiority which we think is ample to allow for the fact that we do not posture our strategy on the surprise attack and therefore we have to always have, in my judgment at least, always should have to have, a real margin of strength in the strategic delivery area.

MR. SCALI: Mr. Gilpatric, you were the first Administration spokesman to lay down the thesis that even if the Soviets were to try a sneak nuclear attack against us, we would not only survive it, but would have enough to virtually wipe out the Soviet Union in a retaliatory blow.

Is this still true, and do you think that this could have been a factor in Premier Khrushchev's decision to pull out the missiles from Cuba?

MR. GILPATRIC: It seems to me from the Soviet actions that they regard, as he stated, that either one

DECLASSIFIED

of these great powers, on the other a thermo-nuclear blow of such proportions as to make that possibility unacceptable to any rational national leader. I think he realizes that. I think his statements both publicly and some of those which perhaps have not been published indicates a realization on his part of the dangers of setting in train any sort of a series of military actions which could scale up to a point where one side or the other would feel it necessary to use the full measure of its nuclear power. But I think our margin is sufficient and I think our national policy will continue to be as it has been now in our long-range planning, of Mr. McNamara's five-year force program, it is founded on the basic cardinal premise that we must keep that margin at all times no matter what the Soviets do.

MR. SCALI: Mr. Secretary, we are about to close down the American missile base in England. Is it possible that we might consider or might close down the American missile base in Turkey and/or in Italy -- not because the Soviets demand it as part of any deal, but because the missiles there might be getting obsolescent?

MR. GILPATRICK: We don't contemplate closing down any of our foreign bases or overseas bases. The removal of the Thor in the case of the UK bases is a matter of substituting one type of weapon for another. The British,

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

16

the UK Valiant bomber force will be able to cover the targets that are assigned to the UK forces -- they and other externally-applied strategic weapons -- to a point where the removal of the Thors, the phasing out of the Thors will not again affect the total military equation.

But I don't believe that we are going to change our present strategy of having many points from which we can defend ourselves if need be with nuclear weapons.

MR. CLARK: You are saying our missile bases in Turkey are still a valuable part of our missile defenses, even though we have adequate Polaris and ICBM's?

MR. GILPATRICK: I consider all the bases we have today as important to us. Now that doesn't mean that there will not come times when we won't modernize our weapons in different areas, where we won't substitute, have different combinations of forces, but as of now, our whole NATO base structure is the foundation of our planning both as a -- as our national forces and the NATO forces and therefore we have no thought of giving up any of our overseas bases.

MR. CLARK: Do you anticipate that the Jupiter missiles in Turkey might be replaced by a more modern type of missile?

MR. GILPATRICK: I am not in a position to say what will be done with the Jupiters. The Jupiters today are assigned targets which are part of the responsibility

DECLASSIFIED

17

of the military to take out in the case of a strike. If there are other means at some stage of taking care of those same targets, we may make some different distribution or deployment, but as of now, we need all the weapons we have deployed.

MR. SCALI: Mr. Secretary, both President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev in their exchange of letters said that the Cuban crisis demonstrates anew the urgent need for some kind of trustworthy disarmament. Do we have any new proposals in this connection which we might offer?

MR. GILPATRICK: I do not know of any new proposals which have been generated out of this particular experience. After all we are not even out of this one yet. However, our Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the other elements in government which work on this whole question of arms control are constantly considering how we can move on toward the goal that we have as a national objective, which is at some stage -- it may not seem very realizable in the immediate future -- of general disarmament. And doubtless in connection with forthcoming disarmament sessions, we will be reviewing our proposals and there may be some variations in what we have heretofore put on the table with the Soviets.

MR. SCALI: What have we learned about our ability to deploy forces and weapons as a result of the Cuban crisis?

MR. GILPATRICK: We have relearned a lesson that we must
DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

18

never forget in this time in history and that is the importance of quick reaction, the ability of moving fast and not having the kind of delays for example that took place when we moved forces into Lebanon a number of years ago, or that the British and the French encountered in the Suez experience. We are in a far better position today than we ever were, and I think this Cuban experience shows it, to organize and dispose of our forces in very fast fashion.

MR. SCALI: Were you generally satisfied with the speed of our buildup and our movement of forces?

MR. GILPATRICK: We are never satisfied, because we never do it completely right. We learned a number of lessons from which we will profit. You try to look at the bright side of these things as well as the somber side and I think the military command would agree with me that we have learned a lot from this exercise that we will now grind into our procedures, and I feel that our forces did a splendid job, all of them. Of course the principal burden fell upon the Navy, plus the technical command of the Air Force, but the preparations that were laid are general worldwide alert. The movement of our forces to be in a position if need be to take stronger military action was done in a way that gave us all a good deal of satisfaction.

MR. GILPATRICK: Mr. Secretary, up next to get your views

on the seriousness of the fighting between India and Red China. Do you think we might eventually have to supply troops as well as arms to India?

MR. GILPATRICK: I am not qualified to discuss that issue as fully as others might be. I have been pretty well-preoccupied this past week with what is happening down in the Caribbean. But you must remember in the context of your question that the Indians have a very large and well-trained army with strong traditions from the earlier days of their association with the British and I believe that they will be able to render a pretty good account of themselves if they are pressed further by the Chinese Communists.

MR. SCALI: For example, sir, do you think perhaps we might need more jet transports to help transport weapons faster to places like India?

MR. GILPATRICK: We have a major buildup going on in our air lift program as a part of the budget last year and our forthcoming budget which will be presented to Congress the first of the year. We will continue to provide increasing numbers of long-range aircraft for carriage both of soldiers, forces, and people, as well as of equipment. It is a very important factor in this quick reaction that I spoke of.

MR. CLARK: One quick final question: How about that

defense budget that is going to Congress next year, is it going to be bigger than this year?

MR. GILPATRIC: It will not be any less, but I don't think the Cuban crisis as such has changed the requirements upwards. I think we've got a long time ahead when we are going to have to maintain a large military establishment for the protection of this country.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Secretary, our time is just about up.

Thank you very much, Secretary Gilpatric, for being with us today on ISSUES AND ANSWERS.

THE ANNOUNCER: This has been another in ABC's news-making series which brings you the answers to the issues of today.

Next week at this same time our guest will be Congressman-elect Robert Taft, Jr., Republican from Ohio. We hope that you will be with us.

ISSUES AND ANSWERS is produced by Peggy Wadon. Directed by Frank Ford. A presentation of ABC News.

- - - -

RECORDED